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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR
INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fifth year

Identical letters dated 15 March 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward herewith the text of a letter dated 15 March 2000 addressed to you by A. Abdullah, Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 50, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ravan FARHÂDI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

00-34687 (E) 180300

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Annex

Letter dated 15 March 2000 from the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan to the Secretary-General

As you are well aware, responding positively to the demand for peace talks made by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Islamic State of Afghanistan, on 8 March 2000, attended in good faith the two-day peace talks, the first in a series, hosted by the OIC in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, which were also attended by your Special Representative for Afghanistan, Francesc Vendrell.

The OIC delegation, attending separate meetings and discussing different issues with the two parties in Jeddah, laid special emphasis on the need for observing a moratorium on the fighting, citing the sanctity and importance of the approaching advent of the Hajj and the Eid al-Adha. The suggestion, though not initialled, was embraced unilaterally and with no preconditions by the delegation of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

It is worth recalling that the Jeddah meeting came only days after the Taliban mercenaries had launched a renewed offensive, at which the Security Council on 3 March expressed its dismay and recalled the repeated demands by the Council that the Afghan parties cease the fighting and resume negotiations under United Nations auspices, without delay and preconditions, in full compliance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council.

Against this background, however, the Taliban mercenaries, evidently tasked by the ruling Pakistani ISI, appear to have been intent on pursuing their military option, for their unabated aerial and ground attacks on the Government-held territories have continued, to date.

Below is a brief record of the Pakistani-Taliban military operations which have taken place since the Jeddah meeting:

(a) 10 March, 6 a.m. Afghanistan standard time (AST):

Pakistani-Taliban forces attacked northern Salang. The attack was repulsed within the course of a two-hour battle. Attackers sustained 60 casualties and left behind seven mortal remains;

(b) 11 March, 4 a.m. AST:

The Pakistani-Taliban troops launched a multipronged attack on Surkh-Sang, Tamaam-Keraan, Zir Jallah, Maktab-e-Sartal, Rabeen, Kewch, and Bajgah areas around Dara-i-Suff, south-west of the province of Samangan, making some advances. The Government forces repelled the mercenaries from the areas later in the day;

(c) 13 March, 7-9 a.m. AST:

An attack by the Pakistani-Taliban on Ailam Bourka was pushed back;

(d) 14 March, 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m. AST:

The Pakistani-Taliban mounted a cohesive attack on northern Salang, infiltrating the front lines. The offensive was forcefully smashed later the same day.

The ongoing intermittent onslaughts by the Pakistani-Taliban are believed to herald an up-coming all-out offensive by the Pakistani-Taliban, according to a battle plan discussed on 10 March at a joint meeting between the Taliban field commanders and a visiting senior Pakistani military corps in Kunduz province, intercepted by the State security services.

(Signed) A. ABDULLAH
Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs
Islamic State of Afghanistan